

Recognizing and Identifying a Gang Presence in Your Home, School or Community

Warning Signs That Your Child May Be Involved with a Gang

This reference provides common warning signs of gang involvement, but may not be all-encompassing. Parents should look for multiple signs to indicate possible gang involvement because some of these indicators alone, such as clothes or musical preferences, are also common among youth not involved in gangs.

- Admits to "hanging out" with kids in gangs
- Shows an unusual interest in one or two particular colors of clothing or a particular logo
- Has an unusual interest in gangster-influenced music, videos, movies, or websites.
- Uses unusual hand signals to communicate with friends
- Has specific drawings or gang symbols on school books, clothes, walls, or tattoos
- Comes home with unexplained physical injuries (fighting-related bruises, injuries to hand/knuckles)
- Has unexplained cash or goods, such as clothing or jewelry
- Carries a weapon
- Has been in trouble with the police

Exhibits negative changes in behavior, such as:

- * Withdrawing from family
- * Declining school attendance, performance, behavior
- * Staying out late without reason
- * Displaying an unusual desire for secrecy
- * Exhibiting signs of drug use
- * Breaking rules consistently
- * Speaking in gang style slang

What Parents Can Do to Prevent Gang Involvement

Parents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with local gang symbols, seek help early, and consider contacting school personnel, local law enforcement, faith leaders, and community organizations for additional assistance.

- Spend quality time with your child
- Get involved in your child's school activities
- Be a positive role model and set the right example
- Know your child's friends and their families
- Encourage good study habits
- Teach your child how to cope with peer pressure
- Help your child develop good conflict/resolution skills
- Encourage your child to participate in positive afterschool activities with adult supervision (recreation centers, organized sports, youth groups)
- Take action in your neighborhood (create a neighborhood alliance, report and remove graffiti)
- Talk with your child about the dangers and consequences of gang involvement. Let your child know that you don't want to see him or her hurt or arrested.

*Explain to your child that he or she should **NOT**:*

- * Associate with gang members
- * Attend parties or social events sponsored by gangs
- * Use hand signs, symbols, or language that is meaningful to gangs
- * Wear clothing, including specific colors, which may have meaning to gangs

What Can A Community Do

- Non profit, faith-based, community and social organizations, and the private sector can get activity involved
- Start programs that can support the youths and their families
- Spend funds on prevention instead of incarceration
- Focus on inclusion, tolerance and seize the opportunity

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.

Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

What Can A Neighborhood Do

- Introduce themselves to their neighbors
- Hold neighborhood events - Include renters
- Engage the youth
- Start a crime watch program
- Immediately report suspicious or illegal activity – Police or WeTip
- Stand up against crime and those who prey on youth

What Can A School Do

- Zero tolerance to gang presence – Train educators
- Put into place support systems for to meet the changing needs of the demographics
- Open doors early/After school programs
- Create clubs of interest
- Provide support mechanisms for youth to be part of positive school activities
- Develop solutions to economic barriers

~Margaret Mead

TIPPECANOE COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE



- Rental Property Owner and Manager Training Program
Keeping Illegal Activity Out of Rental Properties
- WeTip 100% Anonymous Hotline ~ School Safety Program
Call 1-800-78-CRIME to report illegal activity or threats at schools ~ Se Habla Español
- Anti-Gang Initiatives ~ Fighting crime one neighborhood at a time
Community Awareness and Training, Partnership Building, Intel Sharing
Robert Walker's ~ Gang Cops Online: <http://www.gangcopsonline.com>
Students Against Gangs: <http://www.studentsagainstgangs.com>
Teachers Against Gangs: <http://www.teachersagainstgangs.com>
- Community Engagement
Website: <http://www.tippecanoe.in.gov/PSN/>; Twitter, YouTube: TCPSN; Facebook

What Can You Do

- Become **ACTIVELY ENGAGED**
- Educate yourselves
- Teach your friends and families
- Support Anti-Gang Efforts
- Don't underestimate your power to impact others
- Don't tolerate exclusion
- Be vigilant
- Report criminal or suspicious activity